JOHN ALVEY TURNER'S MUSICAL MONTHLY

KEYNOTES

"THE SUCCESS OF KEYNOTES IS THE KEYNOTE OF SUCCESS."

139, Oxford Street, London, W. Edited by D. C. Fairweather.

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Editorial Foreword.

WE are introducing several new features in this number. On page 79 will be found the first of a series of excellent articles on the Mandoline by Mr. Pasquale Troise. His replies to the queries of mandolinists will be found on page 91.

Mr. W. H. Plumbridge has very kindly consented to let us publish a series of chords for Guitar accompaniment to songs. Such a feature has been continually asked for by readers, and we should like to point out that nothing like it can be obtained elsewhere in the country.

Mr. Plumbridge is contributing these chords every other month in Keynotes, and the first set (in C Major and A Minor) appears on page 81.

From this month onwards, our dramatic criticism and theatrical notes will by contributed by "D.M.," which initials conceal the identity of a lady well-known in the dramatic world. Our readers can always rely on Keynotes to keep them well-informed on every theatrical topic of interest, and these criticisms will be a safe guide to any play that is worth seeing.

Finally, we would direct attention to page 89, where an important offer of especial interest to readers is displayed.

How to Play Cammeyer's "Sammy on Parade."

By Bernard Sheaff.

ALTHOUGH as a march it is quite of the conventional order, "Sammy on Parade" is one of the best solos of this type Cammeyer has written in many years.

The idea was inspired by the composer's witnessing the march through London of the first American Troops who landed here in 1917 *en route* for France. The whole solo was completed in less than an hour, and appeared in the *Banjo World* for September, 1917, and with piano and 2nd banjo parts a short time afterwards. The solo is now immensely popular with players of all styles.

The left-hand fingering and positions are very fully marked in the score, and should be strictly observed throughout. The first four bars constituting the introduction should be played boldly *ff* as marked. Alternately finger (R.H.) the two successive A's in bars 1 and 2 ·· ·, and observe the method of sliding the third finger from F to G and back again as indicated in bars 3 and 4. Strongly accent the chord in bar 4, then play the next two bars very softly, or omit them altogether, if desired, when there is a piano accompaniment.

In second stave line, bar 6, the eighth P. chord is rather a long stretch, but the D should be held down (fourth finger) while the G and E are struck, then the third finger held down similarly on the C following, then slurred back to F (bar 7).

Commencing with the third stave line comes a short melody on the fourth string. Be certain to hold down these notes while accompanying chords are played *with first and second R.H. fingers*. Where there are four notes in a bar these may be alternately fingered with thumb and first finger always commencing—first note in the bar—with the thumb, which does the lion's share of the work, the first finger only being utilised to assist. Some players may prefer to use the thumb for these passages entirely and one way is as good as the other provided the phrases are not made to lose their rhythm. There are several instances in the other movements where the fourth string has very similar phrases assigned to it. The player will notice these at once in the short movement in A minor (which commences in stave six, bar 5), and also in the fanfare in the trio commencing at fifth stave (second page) bar 5. The same method of fingering should be used for all this fourth string work.

In staves five and six the positions in the various bars should all be carefully retained as marked, and where there is a note followed by an accompanying chord, hold the melody note down so that the tune sings and is distinctly prominent. The accompanying chords should be played with about half the strength of tone of the melody, but in bars 2 and 3, fifth stave, they may be slightly more marked, as there is a change of harmony.

The short movement commencing at bar 5, sixth stave, is easy to finger in spite of the accidentals, and all the chords and changes come under the fingers. The only change which some players may find awkward is in stave eight, bars 1 and 2. The easiest and best way of executing this movement is to let the fourth finger remain on the A throughout these two bars. Then place the third finger on F sharp (bar 2) as this note is required first, then while in the act of striking same, drop the first and second fingers on E flat and C to complete the chord. With a little careful practice this modulation can be made quite smoothly, and without the left hand being required to make a painful jump from one position to the other.

The trio—in F—starts on the second page. The melody on the third string is most effective and easy, but the positions and fingering must be carefully followed. Keep the left-hand fingers down on the strings throughout the bars in the first stave. Play the first two A's in the last bar ·· ·.

Everything seems unmistakably clear now right to the bottom of the page, as there is a lot of repetition. Do not omit, however, to hold down the top notes in bars 1 and 2, fifth stave; and there are three or four instances of repeated notes on the first string in the fanfare, but the R.H. fingering in each case will, of course, be the same as bar 3 of the intro. at the commencing of the march.

In stave seven, bars 3, 4 and 5, hold the second string C down (first finger) until the last E is slurred to the fourth string G in bar 6. This is a similar phrase to that which occurs in the coda, bars 5, 6 and 7, and the ascending semitones should be made prominent in each case.

The fact that the roll is introduced so frequently into this solo makes it important that the player should practice this effect until he is able to execute it in a completely masterful manner.

"Sammy on Parade" makes a splendid duet for two Banjos, as will be seen by the gramophone record—one of a series—made by Mr. Cammeyer and the writer for the Vocalian Gramophone Company, which record will be issued in May or June of this year.

Paganini and the Guitar (2).

By Philip J. Bone.

DUBOURG, in his notice of Paganini, says, respecting this period of his life: "To those early days belongs also the fact of Paganini's transient (!) passion for the guitar, or, rather, for a certain fair Tuscan lady, who incited him to a study of that feebler instrument, of which she herself was a votary. Applying his acute powers to the extension of its resources, he soon made the guitar an object of astonishment to his fair friend; nor did he resume in earnest that peculiar symbol of his greatness, the violin, till after a lapse of nearly three years." Riemann, in his account of the artist, says: "He played the guitar as an amateur, but with the skill of a virtuoso." That Paganini's admiration and delight for the guitar was no transient passion (as Dubourg states) is proved in many respects, and also by the fact of his complete devotion to its sole study during those years mentioned. It certainly cannot, by any stretch of imagination, be regarded as a passing fancy for an artist of Paganini's attainments and genius to devote three whole years in the prime of his successful career to another instrument.

He was intimate, and performed in public with the leading guitar virtuosi, and the guitar exercised an influence and fascination over his musical nature, as it has done in numerous other instances. During his whole career, Paganini employed it as his accompanying instrument with his pupils and musical friends; and the majority of his compositions published during his lifetime, as also many of his unpublished works, include a part for the guitar. His first compositions for the instrument were written between 1801 and 1804; his last in 1835, and it follows, therefore, that this artist turned his attention seriously and lastingly to the guitar.

The guitar was the instrument he fondled and caressed during those long periods of illness, when his strength was not sufficient for him to resort to the more exacting position required by the violin, and, during the last year of his existence, when his malady had developed, when there was no hope of his recovery, and he was confined to his couch, it was this instrument which throbbed forth its plaintive harmonies under his reclining and lingering touch. In such a weakly condition, it was the only instrument that he could muster sufficient strength to vibrate with musical effect. It is a significant fact, too, that all his compositions, with but one exception—those that are authentic and published during his life-time—contained parts for the guitar, this only exception being Op. 1, twenty-four caprices, or studies for the violin alone. When an intimate friend enquired of Paganini his reason for devoting so much attention to the guitar, his reply was, "I love it for its harmony, it is my constant companion in all my travels." Ferdinand Carulli, the guitar virtuoso, a contemporary of Paganini in Paris, says in his famous guitar method, "The fact may not be generally know that Paganini was a fine performer on the guitar, and that he composed most of his airs on this instrument, arranging and amplifying them on the violin afterwards according to his fancy."

A Berlin critic declared that Paganini executed an air quite *sostenuto* on one string, while, at the same time, a continued tremolo upon the next string was perfectly perceptible, as well as a lively *pizzicato* in guitar style upon the fourth string, thus producing upon one instrument a combination of violin, mandolin and guitar. M. Guhr, an able violinist and an intimate friend of Paganini, endeavoured to ascertain the chief differences of Paganini's playing over that of other celebrated violinists, and attempted to gain his information by interrogation; but finding this method of no avail he adopted a silent study or analysis of the means employed by the master. As one of the chief points of difference, he enumerates in his volume on the subject the following: "In his art of putting the violin into double employ, so as to make it combine with its usual office the simultaneous effects of a mandolin, harp or guitar, whereby you seem to hear two different performers."

Mr. Gardiner, of Leicester, attended one of Paganini's concerts in London, and the following extract from his account is of interest: "At the hazard of my ribs, I placed myself at the opera door, two and a half hours before the concert began. Presently the crowd of musicians and violinists filled the colonnade to suffocation, all anxious to get the front seat, because they had to pay for their places, Paganini not giving a single ticket away."

The concert opened with Beethoven's Second Symphony, admirably performed by the Philharmonic Band, after which Lablache sang "Largo al Factotum" with much applause and was encored. A breathless silence then ensued, and every eye was watching the action of this extraordinary violinist; and as he glided from the side scenes to the front of the stage, an involuntary cheering burst from every part of the house, many rising from their seats to view this "spectre" during the thunder of this unprecedented cheering, his gaunt and extraordinary appearance being more like that of a devotee about to suffer martyrdom, than one to delight you with his art. With the tip of his bow he set off the orchestra, in a grand military movement, with a force and vivacity as surprising as it was new. At the termination of this introduction he commenced with a soft, dreamy note of celestial quality, and, with three or four whips of his bow, elicited points of sound that mounted to the third heaven, and as bright as the stars. A gasp of astonishment and delight burst from the audience at the novelty of this effect. Immediately an execution followed that was equally indescribable, in which were intermingled tones more than human, which seemed to be wrung from the deepest anguish of a broken heart. After this the audience were enraptured by a lively strain, in which you heard, commingled with the tones of the violin, those of the voice, with the pizzicato of the guitar, forming a compound of exquisite beauty. Staccato runs, performed with the bow and concluded with a guitar note, were quite original with Paganini, and it must certainly be admitted from the foregoing extracts that his knowledge of the mandoline and guitar formed no unimportant part in his style of execution.

(*To be concluded.*)

Around the Theatres.

By D. M.

Comedy Theatre.
THE VORTEX.

THIS is not merely a clever play; it is a brilliant one, with touches of unmistakeable genius here and there, especially in the "curtain" to the second act. This is one of the most impressive things ever seen on the stage, and at the same time one of the most original.

It is useless to describe the play in detail, as it must be seen to be appreciated fully. And seen it will be by the majority of people, that is, those blessed with a certain amount of intelligence. The others don't count!

The author plays a very important part, that of the son addicted to drugs, and to him and to Miss Lilian Braithwaite, as the mother, fall the chief honours of the evening.

In the last act they both achieve a very high standard of acting. Noel Coward, who is only twenty-five, is one of the most brilliant and prolific of our younger dramatists, and another play of his, "Easy Virtue," will be produced later in the season, with Constance Collier in a leading role.

D. M.

Apollo Theatre.
BY THE WAY.

This latest production of Jack Hulbert's is like the Curate's Egg—good in parts. The parts that are good are excellent, notably the sketch "Greek as she is taught" with Jack Hulbert and Cicely Courtneidge.

This is a little gem; and "Honeymoon Hall," in which these clever people again figure, is a delightful bit of character-acting.

The opening scene in the second act is quite amusing, and the sketch which follows, "The Triumph," has, in common with many others, called upon the crossword craze for inspiration.

Betty Chester is at her best in "Raggedy Anne," but otherwise her exceptional talents seem rather wasted. The rest of the cast do their best with, at times, very poor material.

D. M.

Duke of York's Theatre.
THE PUNCH-BOWL.

The continued success of this revue has surprised many people, and nobody more than myself. In my opinion, the only things worth seeing are the charming fantasy, "Punch and Judy up-to-date," which occupies the whole of Part 2, and the inimitable drollery of Gwen Farrar at the end of Part 3. But it was all I could do to wait as long as that!

The songs were banal, although at times melodious, and many were sung by prettily inefficient ladies, not above reproach in the matter of their pronunciation of the King's English.

The fact that Alfred Lester succeeded in raising laughter reflects every credit on his personality, and little on his author's.

It may be argued that a revue *must* be worthy, if it can run as long as this, but I decline to accept the "Punch-Bowl" as a legitimate successor to the clever "London Calling," any more than I regard a lot of noise as constituting real humour.

"The Lounger."

"Alas! poor Terpsichore."

By "Decor."

THAT much-maligned muse, Terpsichore, has come in for it again! Not only has she been banned from certain chaste parochial revels, but she has in addition been excommunicated from the programme of a municipal entertainment!

The exact nature of her crime is not apparent, but it seems that she is ungraceful, hectic and decadent, and a pernicious promoter of all sorts of wickedness.

Alas! if only those worthy people who condemn modern dancing *unseen* would take the trouble to examine their subject exhaustively, before committing themselves to such sweeping statements in print! I will readily admit that many of our ball-rooms can show dancing that is ungraceful, but where, oh *where* are those feverish and hilarious displays to be observed?

Anyone versed in the modern dance will bear me out when I say that a serious demeanour is a most essential part of the performance. The slightest sign of levity would place the rash exhibitor thereof beyond the pale, and would deprive him or her of the very designation of "dancer."

If any pillar of the Church or the State imagines the modern dance to be "jazzy"—whatever that much-used and little-understood adjective may mean!—let him visit any public dance-hall, and watch the innocuous proceedings for himself.

He will find a large, well-ventilated room, with a vast expanse of dancing-floor, surrounded by little tables, at which the revellers are consuming admittedly dreadful drinks, such as lemon-squash or fruit-cup.

He will notice a bevy of professional partners, with whom it is permissible to dance, provided that a preliminary fee of sixpence is paid, and that the damsel is returned to the "pen" in an undamaged condition directly the dance is over.

When the band strikes up, he will observe the devotees sweeping round the floor with precise, unvarying steps, their faces tense and their minds concentrated on preserving a perfect equipoise.

As for laughter, perish the thought! If people look as if they are really enjoying themselves, they will be occasional visitors, who still retain the memories of joyous juvenile soirees, and who are unaware of correct modern manners.

They will never have heard of fox-trot competitions or tango exhibitions, and, strictly speaking, they have no right to be there at all!

Everyone else is so serious that one might imagine that they are assisting in the obsequies of some well-loved friend.

And, obviously, if people intended to be vicious, they would choose some other place than a dance for their purpose.

The type of mind which holds dancing responsible for the hysteria of a small percentage of the populace has its parallel in the peculiar legal attitude that attributes all juvenile crime to the demoralising influence of the cinema.

Our would-be purgers of modern society should turn their attention to whist-drives or table-tennis tournaments, if they really wish to discover genuine vice!

It is high time that poor old Terpsichore was left alone!

"My Banjo Experiences."

By Will Herbert.

Mr. Will Herbert.

MY career as a Banjoist commenced at Bradford, Yorkshire, at the age of six years, and I was then known as the "Midget Banjoist," and for this reason the honour "F.O.S." was conferred upon me by "Ally Sloper," who forwarded me a certificate of merit which is dated 25th September, 1891.

At this time I had appeared at public concerts in many principal towns in Yorkshire, viz., Bradford, Doncaster, Halifax, Leeds, Wakefield and smaller towns.

In these early days I was always accompanied by my father, who was well known as an expert and accomplished Banjoist, and he is at the present time still keenly interested, teaching the Banjo.

In 1893 we left Yorkshire to reside in North London, and it was not long before we were widely known as the "North London Expert Banjoists."

We were then appearing at most of the local concerts as Banjo duettists.

However, for several years I have confined myself to solo work.

My first experience of broadcasting on the wireless was at 2 L O on 4th April, 1923, when the British Broadcasting Co.'s studio (which was very small) was situated in one of the top rooms at Marconi House, Aldwych.

I must admit that although I had never before felt nervous when going to play before the public, I certainly felt a little so prior to arriving at Marconi House, but as soon as I was shown into the studio, my nervousness completely left me, and I at once made up my mind to make myself at home and do justice to the Banjo.

On this occasion I played two groups of three pieces which were :—"Camptown Carnival," "Mountaineers' March," "Frederica Galop"; "Poppies and Wheat,' "The Red Cockade," "Black Pearl."

I may say that after all was over, the perspiration was trickling down my cheeks, as the studio was very close owing to the small space and lack of ventilation.

Happily, however, the B.B.C. have obviated matters extensively, as I have since had the pleasure of broadcasting from the two Studios at 2, Savoy Hill.

I am a firm believer that broadcasting has brought the Banjo well to the front, especially more so to the large number of the general public who looked upon it as an instrument only for vamping. However, I think the majority are now in favour of it being classified an instrument of great charm, and I have personally found this so by my experiencing more engagements than hitherto.

There are, of course, different styles of playing, which are briefly : picking and plectrum playing.

Some prefer the plectrum, but this is simply a matter of taste. I certainly prefer the original method of playing, *i.e.*, picking, and being a solo banjoist, that is the reason I have never taken to the plectrum, as I find that with finger work one can play more clearly, and that every note can be distinguished.

The plectrum is chiefly used at the present time in Dance Bands, and it is in this direction there are numerous enthusiasts who have taken up lessons for this class of work, as the present day Dance Bands are not complete unless the Banjo is included, and when properly harmonised the rhythmic effect is a vast improvement.

In conclusion, I should like to say how pleased I am to see KEYNOTES come to life again, after so many years of absence, and I wish it the hearty success it certainly merits.

A DATE TO REMEMBER.

Mr. Tarrant Bailey and his son have again been engaged to broadcast from 5WA, the Cardiff Station of the B.B.C., on Saturday, 18th April, 1925. This is to be the occasion of a "Jolly Fellows' Night," and Mr. Tarrant Bailey (sen.) will accompany five of the vocal quartettes, in addition to performing the following numbers :—

"A Joy Ride" (*Joe Morley*).
"Mauna Loa" (*Joe Morley*).
"The Jovial Huntsman" (*Joe Morley*).
"Camptown Carnival" (*Joe Morley*).
"Niggertown" (*Joe Morley*).
"Donkey Laugh" (*Joe Morley*).
"Old Times Medley" (solo performed by Mr. Tarrant Bailey (jun.) by permission of the composer Joe Morley).

"The Playful Amateur."

By D. C. Fairweather.

THIS is the time when many amateur dramatic societies are giving their last production of the season, before turning lightly to golf and tennis, and I feel that I cannot let the occasion pass without a few words on so comprehensive a subject.

It is the belief of many worthy people that amateur theatricals are intended merely to afford a little gentle amusement and recreation during the winter months.

This, of course, is far from being the case.

The only difference that I have ever noticed between amateurs and their professional brethren of the stage is that the amateurs are inclined to take themselves much more seriously.

For the rest, you will find all the idiosyncrasies and affectations of many theatrical stars reflected in their aspiring counterparts of amateur circles.

There is the same reluctance of the elderly *ingenue* to relinquish the role of the simple village maiden, although it is fully thirty years since she first played the part.

There is the same insistence on the part of ladies—although this trait is not exclusively confined to the fair sex!—to play parts totally unsuited to them in every possible way.

And there are the same seeking for approbation, and display of nerves, which characterise the first night of any given production.

* * * *

But, of course, all the serious business has been accomplished long before the first rehearsal. I refer to the Committee meetings, where a dozen hectic individuals speak simultaneously, and recast the play twenty times in the first half hour. Eventually, those members with the most brazen lungs, and the most complete disregard of the ideas of others, get their way.

The casting notices are sent forth, causing much inevitable heartburning in the district. Then the first rehearsal is called. Everyone turns up with immense enthusiasm, eager to get busy. Dances and choruses are taken again and again with no signs of flagging energies, and no one dreams of leaving before the producer has had his final say.

The second rehearsal is much the same, but the third and fourth are not quite so enthusiastic, as regards the male chorus.

Sad depletions in their ranks are noticeable, and this goes on until there is only one ancient "die-hard" left, who probably has an insufficiency of teeth, and a penchant for hanging on to the wrong note after everyone else has stopped singing.

The frenzied producer tries to visualise in his mind where the remaining eleven gentlemen should be, if they were present, and mentally rehearses a scathing oration, which he will address to them when (and if) they *do* turn up.

* * * *

The principals will have the first few rehearsals on their own. It is not seemly that their raw and unconvincing efforts should be observed by the company, for then the many disgruntled dames in the chorus would exclaim, "There! Look at the hopeless mess she's making of the part! I always knew I could have done it better!" When the stars are more or less qualified to mix with the common herd, who have in the meantime been having the music dinned into their unreceptive ears, the first general rehearsal takes place.

The principals engage in battle royal with the harassed musical director, and the leading lady performs her great solo dance, which she has been learning assiduously for the last fortnight. To the applause which follows, she will exclaim deprecatingly, "Oh, my dear, it was awful! But you see, this is the first time I've really tried it all through." Whereat the other damsels coo sweetly, "But, *my dear*, you were wonderful!" and the undeceived gentlemen murmur "Liar!"

When the producer has satisfied himself that the movements of the chorus are more or less mechanically remembered, he contents himself with an occasional, "Don't talk, please!" to the gentlemen, and "Smile, ladies!" to the damsels. Neither of these injunctions are obeyed, because the gentlemen don't see why they shouldn't talk, as they are "not paid for all this rot," and the ladies are fundamentally unable to remember the words and smile sweetly at the same time. Besides, surely it is savouring of levity to relax the features at an amateur performance?

* * * *

As the great night approaches, enthusiasm revives, and the absentees come creeping back furtively, watching what their more zealous comrades are doing, and endeavouring to avoid the baleful eye of the producer.

By dint of being pushed surreptitiously into the correct places, they manage to get away with it well enough to avoid wrecking the show. The dress rehearsal is awful. It always is. But somehow or other the show bucks up wonderfully for the vital nights. The make-up and the costumes and scenery combine to put fresh heart into the trembling amateurs.

Besides, half the audience are fond relatives and friends of the cast and have come fully prepared to applaud every appearance of little Enid and little Joyce, and to proffer an enormous mass of floral tributes at the close of the evening to any one who could possibly be said to deserve them.

And the other half of the audience bear no personal malice to the performers, but secretly hope that the scenery will collapse at a critical moment, or that the hero's moustache will adhere to the blushing cheek of the heroine.

But if the worst comes to the worst, well, the ordeal can only last for three hours, and about half of that time is taken up by the intervals. Our only real dread is lest the leading lady has been allotted her part, owing to the fact that she is related to the Hon. President, or the Hon. Treasurer, or the Hon. Gentleman-who-hires-the-Hall-cheaply, and not to any inborn talent she may possess.

In that unhappy, but by no means uncommon, event, the audience must console themselves with the reflection that, as a percentage of profits is devoted to the local hospital, the artistic outrage must be regarded as another crime committed in the name of Charity!

The Mandoline.

By Pasquale Troise.

Introductory.

I HAVE been invited by the Editor to write every month a few notes on the Mandoline, which I hope may be of interest to readers of Keynotes.

Where shall I begin ?

Always bearing in mind that amongst my readers there will be the absolute novices, the beginners, the proficient and advanced Mandolinists, my efforts must be to cater for them all.

I am therefore convinced that to start at the very beginning will be the best for all concerned. It will be interesting and instructive to the novice, and even advanced students may well profit by and recapitulate their early endeavours.

I shall try to make my notes graduated, comprehensive and exhaustive, so that by keeping and referring to the back numbers of Keynotes you will have the whole range of notes before you, as a guide and reference.

What is a mandoline ? I am not referring to the history, evolution or origin of the instrument. I am referring now to the Mandoline as we have it to-day, which is practically standardised and similar the world over.

To my mind the Mandoline is a musical instrument of the very highest order, which is so little understood and yet so much abused.

When you come to consider the thousands that are made and sold annually, how many Mandoline players can you find, yes, even in the elementary stages ?

A very small number indeed in comparison with the large number of instruments that are sold every year.

What is the reason for this ?

To many the Mandoline is a musical instrument like the Mouth-organ or the Jew's harp ! You can buy a Mandoline (*sic !*) for a few shillings. You see them hanging up in musical shops, so pretty with ornamental mother-of-pearl designs : they are simply ideal as birthday presents ! You can buy a tutor for a shilling or so !

Ah ! such Tutors, with a study in positions at the third or fourth lesson ! And there you are—it is expected that within a week or so that the lucky recipient of this well-intended gift will become a full-fledged Mandolinist !

Alas, what a disappointment is in store for the would-be Mandolinists of this class ! And their name is legion.

Some, by dint of perseverance, get as far as to become Mandoline players by ear (what laborious and misguided efforts !)

In the far greater majority of cases, the Mandoline, battered and neglected, is abandoned in some dusty corner, the limbo of forgotten things. And yet, with careful tuition and graduated training, what pleasure and joy there may be obtained from the Mandoline !

Those who have had the pleasure of hearing Mario de Pietro playing, will realise this, and even if we cannot all become as expert as he, we must realise there is enough in the Mandoline to occupy pleasurably our spare moments, and to alleviate the many dull hours of our present-day existence.

Selection and Purchase of a Mandoline.

In the selection and purchase of a Mandoline we are apt to be a little too haphazard. For a prospective beginner we get the idea that " anything is good enough to start on."

This is entirely wrong. For beginners, the initial or elementary stage is the most trying, least interesting, and very difficult period. It therefore behoves us to give every possible assistance and encouragement to the embryonic Mandolinist, in an endeavour to render this stage less difficult.

A good instrument creates pride of possession, and that is a good beginning. Let your first Mandoline be your best Mandoline. It is surprising what wear and tear these apparently fragile instruments will stand, and if anything they improve as time goes on.

Then when eventually you become proficient, you will have acquired such a sentimental regard for your first Mandoline, you will have got to know all its little peculiarities and potentialities.

It will have become your most intimate and boon companion, and you will be very loath to exchange your old friend for even the most aristocratic, highly-polished and elegant Mandoline ever displayed in shop window or show-case.

How would you select your Mandoline ?

This is a most difficult question to answer.

It is reasonable to suppose that at this stage you know very little, if anything, about the Mandoline. If you have a friend who is a Mandolinist of experience, and if you can safely rely on his judgment, leave it to him, and he will probably make a good purchase.

Do not be misled by showy mother-of-pearl ornamentation, although most Mandolines are tastily decorated, but *not* over-decorated at the sacrifice of tone and constructional strength.

Particularly, make sure that the fretting of the keyboard is correct and true, as, if this is not so, the Mandoline is entirely worthless. Insist on well-known and reputable makes.

These firms have built a reputation for their instruments on the recommendations of satisfied players, justified only by the good qualities of their instruments.

It merely becomes a question of which of the many good instruments supplied will you have ? That can best be answered by your pocket, but there are enough to choose from to suit all pockets.

The next essential is a good teacher.

Let Keynotes be your guide, and you are safely embarked on what will assuredly prove to be a most fascinating recreation and instructive accomplishment—the playing of the Mandoline.

In my next article, I will deal with how to hold the Mandoline and the plectrum.

EDITOR'S NOTE.

We have received several queries addressed to Sig. de Pietro with reference to matters concerning Mandolinists.

Owing to the absence of Sig. de Pietro, Mr. Pasquale Troise has very kindly consented to answer these questions.

The letters of the correspondents and Mr. Troise's remarks will be found on page 91 of this issue.

We shall hope to have many more points of interest to readers brought up for discussion in future numbers of Keynotes.

How to Play "Nadasia."

By Joe Morley.

BEFORE commencing to learn this piece the student should first understand that it must be played in a dainty manner. This applies whether it is being played in an ordinary room or on a concert platform.

I know of many players who will play a Gavotte daintily enough in a room, but directly they get on to a concert stage they think that they must thump the strings as hard as they can, for fear those at the back of the hall will not be able to hear them.

They forget that it is vibration that carries, and in many cases there is more vibration when the strings are picked softly in the correct way, than when they are plucked hard.

It will be noted that in the first movement the melody is on the third string. The grace-notes on the first and second strings must therefore be subsidiary, or in the nature of accompanying notes.

The third string must be made to stand out above these grace-notes, but I do not want the student to run away with the idea that he must give *undue* prominence to this third-string melody.

I would warn the student against setting his thumb underneath this string. In this manner he will only pull the string up, and it will then flap back against the neck of the banjo, and the tone will be far from pleasing.

It will be found that if the wrist of the right hand is held as near level as possible in a straight line with the elbow, the third string (or other strings, for that matter) will be picked in the correct manner and the resulting tone will be more pure and full. What I wish to convey is that the wrist should not become depressed and allowed to rest on the vellum, as this can only result in the thumb getting under the third string causing it to be pulled upward when picked.

The second movement will be seen to be written in the "Fugue" style, and special care must be taken in giving all notes their full value. This is especially applicable to those notes which form the harmonies. For example, in the first bar of this movement the two minims, *A* and *C*, must be given their full value by being held down by the left hand, and allowed to vibrate during the time the crochet *E* and two following quavers *F* and *E* are being played. The crochet following (*A*) must be allowed to vibrate likewise while the two quavers *D sharp* and *B* are being played. It is only by paying particular and careful attention to these important details that this movement can convey what is intended. Great care must also be taken that none of the fingers of the right hand are allowed to come into contact with these harmony notes, or they will be damped immediately and the whole meaning destroyed. These remarks apply to the remainder of this movement, and also to the third movement in *F*.

With regard to the interlude which leads to the first movement once more, this should be commenced rather slower than the third movement has been played, with a slight *rallentando* during the first bar which should extend to the first beat of the second bar. The following notes of this bar should be played *accelerando* to lead back to the original *tempo* of the succeeding movement.

With regard to the finish, the *rallentando* should be commenced as marked at the sixth bar from the end, but should be very gradual, so that the finish can be very soft, and full value be given to the two final bars.

CHORDS FOR GUITAR ACCOMPANIMENT.

Arranged by W. H. Plumbridge.

ON the opposite page will be found a series of chords, in *C* major and *A* minor respectively.

These form the first of a series of such chords, which will appear in Keynotes every *other* month.

There have been continual demands for these chords, and they will without doubt be of the greatest assistance to guitar players. It will be noticed that they are not intended to form a complete range, but merely to act as a guide to guitar players, who will adapt them to the desired accompaniment.

We are indebted greatly to Mr. Plumbridge for the trouble he has taken in compiling this feature for the benefit of readers of Keynotes, who will, we fancy, not be backward in showing their appreciation.

ANNUAL DANCE AND CABARET.

AT THE LONDON POLITICAL SCHOOL OF ECONOMICAL AND POLITICAL SCIENCE.

AT the above-named function, on the 27th February, 1925, Mrs. R. Liversidge, a pupil of Mr. W. H. Plumbridge, gave several Hawaiian Guitar solos, which were very much appreciated. She played "Pua Carnations," "Kawaihau March" (E. K. Kai) and "Drifting on Hilo Bay" (Burke).

Her skilful rendering of these charming pieces clearly indicated that she will make a name for herself in the near future.

NEWS FROM ACROSS THE SEAS.

SOME COLONIAL READERS' VIEWS.

India (*Mussoorie.*)

"Delighted to receive the February number of Keynotes, with its excellent articles and interesting features.

I hope that you will include articles on the Steel-Guitar, for there are so many steel-guitar players out here that I am sure you will have many more subscribers. With best wishes.—G.A."

Canada (*Winnipeg*).

"Please accept my congratulations on the reappearance of Keynotes.

It is my first acquaintance with it, as I did not commence playing the banjo until I landed in France in 1915. The pleasure of reading and playing the material offered, of becoming one of the immense company of banjoists and players of all manner of musical instruments, which Keynotes must soon reach, is beyond me to describe, and I am particularly keen owing to the fact that the five-string Banjo is neglected here to a great extent. It is difficult to get the music one wants, and impossible to hear the latest and best selections. Keynotes, by publishing pieces monthly, and including composers' explanations, bids fair to fill this gap, and I trust its success will be complete and permanent.

Yours very truly, F.D.B."

Australia (*Sydney*).

"I am delighted to welcome dear old Keynotes back amongst Banjo-players after all these years. It is better than ever, and of the utmost help and interest to us all. When it comes to a matter of holding a mass meeting of enthusiasts you can bet 'Australia will be there'! Yours sincerely, H.W.B."

"Keynotes" Theatrical Gallery.

No. IV.—**Mr. Huntley Wright.**

MR. HUNTLEY WRIGHT is in the foremost rank of musical comedy comedians, a position that he has retained for a long period. He played the principal comedy parts in such old favourites as "The Count of Luxembourg" and "The Dollar Princess" at Daly's Theatre, and it is at this same theatre that his most recent successes have been scored.

His Suitangi in "The Lady of the Rose" will be fresh in the minds of the theatre-going public, and his Joseph Calicot, the vagrant poet who rose to the rank of Court Bard in "Madame Pompadour," was another remarkable triumph.

Mr. Wright has a wonderful range of facial expression, which, when combined with great dancing skill and a strong sense of burlesque, carries him triumphantly through any part he may play.

Attempts to copy his particular brand of humour have been made by various comedians, incapable of establishing a definite type of their own, but it is hardly necessary to say that Mr. Huntley Wright's personality is unique and inimitable.

The Repertory Players.
"TUNNEL TRENCH."

We have lately had several plays dealing with the war, but this one, by the well-known dramatic critic, Mr. Hubert Griffith, concerns itself entirely with the battle-front, and has no woman at all in the cast.

I think I am right in saying that this is Mr. Griffith's first play, and it is a play of great possibilities. The author, however, has somehow managed to detach himself, and incidentally his audience, from the main theme of the play, viz., the taking of Tunnel Trench from the enemy, and in consequence one finds oneself following with far greater interest the characters of the play, rather than the play itself.

This may or may not be Mr. Griffith's intention, but the fact remains, and it gives the play a somewhat episodic nature. The scenes are detached, and one or two of them in particular might well be played separately, as one-act playlets.

Of the acting one cannot speak too highly.

Lieut. St. Aubyn (Mr. Henry Kendall) and his friend Lieut. Smith (Mr. James Raglan) are the outstanding characters: the rest have little to do, but are nevertheless individually excellent in their respective parts.

Mr. Kendall's performance is magnificent throughout. He never strikes a false note, not even in his biggest emotional moments, and of these he has several, the finest one being after his friend is killed by enemy bullets, when taking observations over "Tunnel Trench," and he is narrating the detail to his superior officer.

This is a very fine, sincere piece of acting, and should place Mr. Kendall in the foremost rank of our young actors, if, indeed, he has not already achieved that distinction.

Mr. Griffith has been fortunate in getting such clever people as the "Repertory Players" to produce his play.

D. M.

GUIDE TO THE DRAMA.

No. I.—THE EASTERN PLAY.

EXOTIC dramas of the East
Predominate the land;
Regardless of both man and beast
These mammoth plays are manned;
They feature every sort of mammal,
From jumping-kangaroo to camel!

To make the atmospherics tense
Extremely pungent fumes
Are wafted o'er the audience,
Before the play resumes:
A cute effect, you understand,
For themes of Love amidst the Sand!

Although I do not feel I can
Expound the subtle plot,
You may be sure the colour-ban
Is introduced a lot;
With desert Sheiks and English girls,
Or lads involved with Chinese "pearls."

"Oh, East is East," the poets sing,
"And ne'er with West shall mix!"
Alas, they do not know a thing
About the drama's tricks:
Despite our play producers' best,
Their "Orient" looks very West!

D. C. F.

Leger Lines.

The following is a cutting from the "North Mail and Daily Chronicle," of Newcastle-on-Tyne :—

"A concert was held in the Presbyterian Church Hall, Heaton Road, Newcastle, last night. An excellent programme was contributed, amongst which was a most enjoyable turn by Mr. W. McEwan's Banjo Party. This popular party gave the following well-known numbers : 'White Coons,' 'Sweet Memories' Valse, 'Black Coquette,' 'Kilties,' 'Fanfare des Dragons,' 'Life in Louisiana,' 'To the Front,' 'Entrancement,' and 'Galop de Concert.'

It must be many years since fourteen banjoists took the platform in this city. After giving eight numbers, Mr. McEwan's party were compelled to go on the stage again, owing to the continued applause, to give another number.

The "Nottingham Evening Post" of the 10th February, 1925, says :—

"Miss Marjorie Richardson, of Boswell Street, Radford, who, although only fifteen years of age, is recognised as one of the finest banjoists in the country, has obtained her second engagement to lead the orchestra at the Scala Cafe Dansant, Torquay, for the summer season. This is believed to be the world's record for a banjoist so young. We understand that she not only plays dance music at sight, but takes lead from the first violin copy (plectrum) in selections. She started when five years of age, and was playing publicly at nine. It is not surprising to hear that she has been engaged nearly every night through the season, at all the best balls within fifty miles of Nottingham."

THE TARRANT BAILEY BANJO CLUB.

The League of Young Liberals' Football Club gave a grand concert at the Liberal Club, Luton, on the 18th February. Perhaps the most popular items of an excellent evening's entertainment were the appearances of Mr. Phillip J. Bone's Mandoline Band. This famous combination rendered amongst other pieces, "Zampa" Overture, "Der Freischutz" (Weber) and "Minuet" (Lulli), with consummate skill, and received a great ovation.

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(OPPOSITE HIGH STREET KENSINGTON STATION, MET.)

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THE ORIGINAL BANJO ORCHESTRA

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Mr. A. D. CAMMEYER Banjoist.
Mr. BERNARD SHEAF Banjoist.
Mr. REX HAROLD Entertainer.
Mr. GEOFFREY DUPREE Entertainer.

Accompanist—**Mr. FREDERICK ARTHUR.**

AND THE

ASTON BANJO ORCHESTRA

Conductor—**Mr. HARRY MARSH.**

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"TARRANT BAILEY BANJO CLUB."

THE February meeting of the Tarrant Bailey Banjo Club was held on Thursday Feb. 26th, when there were present Mrs. R. Gilling, Mrs. C. B. Graham, Mrs. M. de B. Scott, Mrs. Tarrant Bailey, Misses M. F. Bailey, J. Swindin, N. Whitbread, Major M. de B. Scott, Captain C. F. Whitbread, Dr. B. G. Thompson, and Messrs. Miles T. Burrows (President), R. Tarrant Bailey (Secretary), F. E. Deverall (Treasurer), R. Tarrant Bailey (jun.), G. Grundy, R. Ridout, L. W. Sheppard, and R. Hilton Smith

The following are a few of the items performed by members :—

"A Gay Gossoon" .. .. *Vess L. Ossman*
Mrs. R. GILLING.
"A Coon Song" .. .. *Bert Bassett*
Mr. G. GRUNDY.
"Lancashire Clogs" .. *Emile Grimshaw*
Miss N. WHITBREAD.
"Chanson d'ete" .. .. *Bert Bassett*
Dr. B. C. THOMPSON.
"Fooling the Frets" .. *Emile Grimshaw*
Mr. R. HILTON SMITH.
"A Black Coquette" .. *Emile Grimshaw*
Mr. R. RIDOUT.

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(2) Whether Banjo or Mandoline is desired.

ONLY A LIMITED NUMBER AVAILABLE.
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John Alvey Turner's Banjo Budget.

ROLL NO. 1.

Excelsior March	*Ellis*
Sentinel March	do.
Sleigh-Ride	do.
Cleveland March	do.

ROLL NO. 2.

Carolina March	*Ellis*
Battle of Flowers	do.
Nelly Gray (with Variations) ..	*Lansing*
Selection from "Maritana" ..	*Ellis*

ROLL NO. 3.

Manhattan Medley Overture ..	*Ellis*
Last Rose of Summer (with Variations)	*Ellis*
Kaffir War-Dance	*Tilley*
Darkie Revels	*Greenop*

John Alvey Turner's Mandolinist

ROLL NO. 1.

Barcarolle	*Ellis*
La Carnival March	do.
La Violette Valse	*Elieson*
Celia Gavotte	*Greenop*

ROLL NO. 2.

Souvenir March	*Ellis*
Padua Valse	do.
Chere Ami (andante)	*Heath*
Nemo Galop	*Greenop*

ROLL NO. 3.

Elsie Valse	*Ellis*
Adagio	*Spinelli*
Minuetto and Trio (from Haydn's Twelfth Symphony)	*Sykes*
Valencia March	*Greenop*

"On the Silver Screen."

FILM NOTES.

"*THE Love Story of Aliette Brunton*" is one of those films which one enjoys far more if one has not read the book from which it is freely adapted.

This is an English production, admirably cast, acted and produced, and yet there seems to be something lacking.

It would surely have been preferable to have made it a full three hours' entertainment, and to have included all the subsidiary themes. Of course, the version I saw may have been a cut one—by no means an unfamiliar trick in the provinces—for it lasted only an hour and a half.

The whole purpose of the book is to expose a divorce system, which ties a woman to a brutal husband, yet gives her no redress if she has the courage to go away with her lover. Aliette Brunton leaves her husband Hector for young Ronald Cavendish, and Hector refuses to give her a divorce. She is unable to divorce him for his many infidelities, as she has legally condoned these by continuing to live in the same house with her husband, though not as his wife.

The book shows the martyrdom, social and moral, which is hers, as a result of her action. She cannot move in Society, nor any lesser social sphere, but must live in suburban obscurity or dingy boarding-houses, while her children will be born with the stigma of illegitimacy overshadowing them.

The film ignores this extremely tense and interesting problem. We see none of Aliette's ostracism by her old friends, and none of her mental anguish, and, consequently, the film loses grip.

The producer is content to concentrate his energies on the great murder trial, where Ronald Cavendish is defending the alleged murderess, Lucy Towers, while his hated rival, Hector Brunton, K.C., is briefed for the prosecution. The resemblance the unfortunate woman bears to Aliette makes Cavendish all the more eager to secure an acquittal, and Brunton all the more savage to obtain the supreme penalty of the law. In this part of the film, Isobel Elsom as Lucy (she combines this role with that of Aliette), Henry Victor as Cavendish, and James Carew as the hectoring Hector Brunton, give magnificent performances. Miss Elsom, in particular, was outstandingly brilliant, and she could not be surpassed by any other screen actress, transatlantic or home-grown. The reason for Hector's sudden change of attitude to the divorce question is not made clear in the film, for he seems to relent only after being knocked down by Cavendish—surely an unlikely thing, having regard to the man's character!

The book is entirely convincing here, but the film is not, owing to the fact that Julia Cavendish, the famous novelist, and mother of Ronald, is not represented as a novelist at all, her part being confined to heart-attacks, and the inevitable death-bed scene. Consequently, her last novel, which is to secure Aliette's divorce owing to pressure of public opinion, is not mentioned at all!

However, the film is free from the ridiculous exaggeration and distortion of English life which mars 80 per cent. of American films, and if Mr. Gilbert Frankau has professed himself as satisfied, who am I to criticise?

* * * * *

"*Zeebrugge*" is now a star attraction throughout the country, and deservedly so, for it tells of a deathless epic, and tells it in the most convincingly dramatic way. It is interesting to see the effect it has on various audiences. One thing I have observed is that there is none of the usual shuffling out or reaching for hats and overcoats, while the National Anthem is played at the end.

Everyone stands rigid, and there is a feeling of supreme pride and patriotism, in the theatres in which the film is shown.

As for the film itself, who shall attempt to describe the incredible valour of an exploit which seemed to spell certain death for all concerned, and yet was carried through with a tenacity and skill which made it conspicuous even amongst the heroic deeds of that time? To praise is an impertinence.

In the words of a famous critic, "Compared with these men, what is Douglas Fairbanks but a grinning mountebank, or Rudolf Valentino but an effeminate clothes-peg?" I sincerely hope that this epic is shown in the heart of "Red" and "Bolshie" districts, so that even these renegades may be brought to some realisation of what the *real* men of the Empire achieved during the war.

* * * * *

"*Decameron Nights*" is one of the most ineffective and unconvincing films I have seen for a long time. It is a British production, and I should like to say nice things about it, but if criticism is to be of any value, and not an insincere travesty, one must be honest. The film teems with irritating faults and inconsequential touches which one would have hoped had long since died out.

From a storm, compared with which D. W. Griffith's worst cataclysm is but an April shower, comes Perdita, her golden hair devoid of any moisture whatever, her whole appearance giving the impression that she is fresh from the hands of the coiffeur and maid!

As to the plot, the authors have fallen between the two stools of dull respectability and lurid libertinism. Possibly they thought that Boccaccio would prove too temperamental for English palates, but in that case why attempt to reproduce him? Why not do a pantomime, or another "Chu Chin Chow"?

The eclipse of the sun was far too drawn-out, and the virtuous lady, condemned on the flimsiest evidence to stand naked in the market-place before the populace of Venice, must have wearied of her protracted wait as much as I did.

It is only right to say that the film is below the standard of British productions, otherwise one would not feel too sanguine as to the chances held by native films against the formidable tide of foreign invasion.

D. C. F.

Correspondence.

WHAT OUR READERS ARE SAYING.

The Editor, KEYNOTES.

Dear Sir,

I was very pleased to receive a specimen copy of KEYNOTES, the publication of which has just been resumed. Before the war I was a regular subscriber, and have much pleasure in renewing my annual subscription to such an excellent little paper. Should I need additional copies I will let you know.

Yours faithfully,
HAROLD A. WEST.

The Editor, KEYNOTES.

Dear Sir,

I am forwarding my effort in the Competition as announced in the current issue of KEYNOTES.

Thanking you for putting such an excellent magazine before us, and wishing you all the very best of luck and prosperity.

Yours faithfully,
J. SPEECHLEY.

The Editor, KEYNOTES.

Dear Sir,

I think KEYNOTES is fine, and your Competitions should arouse your readers' enthusiasm. I am very glad to hear that you are going to give us some help with our Zither banjos.

I fear you will find the enclosed article rather crude, but we all hope to improve as we study KEYNOTES.

Wishing you every success,

Yours sincerely,
LILY REDLER.

C/o Eastern Telegraph Co., Ltd.,
Suez, Egypt.

The Editor, KEYNOTES.

Dear Sir,

I enclose an article for your February competition for amateur authors. I am afraid it may be a little late, as I did not receive KEYNOTES until we called at Suez, and we left next day for Port Sudan, where I shall despatch the article.

I should like to wish KEYNOTES every success in the future, and assure you of my moral and, if necessary, active support.

Yours sincerely,
C. J. W. PRESCOTT.

The Editor, KEYNOTES.

Dear Sir,

I should like to write my great appreciation of the work you are doing in giving us such an excellent and helpful paper as KEYNOTES.

I am sure that everyone will agree with me when I say that it is the most beneficial and interesting maga zine that has ever been introduced to lovers of the Banjo, Mandoline and Guitar. And the additional features on the world of the theatre, dancing, and cabaret make most interesting reading.

Please carry on the good work, and accept the sincere thanks of an old subscriber.

Yours very truly,
R. V. MIDDLETON.

Answers to Correspondents.

By PASQUALE TROISE.

(*In the absence of Mario de Pietro.*)

Question.

3 New Street, Limerick.

Dear Sir,

I have read in KEYNOTES that you are prepared to give your most valuable advice to amateur mandolinists, and I would much appreciate an answer to the following questions :—

(1) Of what substance is the plectrum made which produces the softest effects ?

(2) Can one obtain loud and soft quality bridges ?

(3) Is there any difference in the effect produced by high or low bridge ?

(4) Does it matter whether the bridge is near or far from the finger-board ?

Faithfully yours,
T. P. FANNING.

Answer.

(1) *Tortoise-shell is probably the best substance or medium for Mandoline plectrums. They should be of medium size and correct shape. Let them be flexible and rather on the thin side. For soft effects play over round hole, for loud effects play near the bridge. See that the edges are smooth and polished, so as to glide easily over the strings.*

(2 and 3) *Bridges on the mandoline are practically of standard size and shape. Low bridges give softer and quieter effects and easier playing. High bridges give louder and more brilliant tones, but require correspondingly greater pressure of fingers on the keyboard. If bridges are* too *high, they are likely to distort tones.*

(4) *The correct position of bridge is so that the twelfth fret is exactly central between top nut and bridge. That is to say, the distance from top nut to twelfth fret is carefully measured, and the bridge should be placed or fixed a similar distance from the twelfth fret, otherwise you will not have a correct scale.*

Question.

97, Hamilton Place, Aberdeen.

Dear Sir,

Is it consistent and correct slurring if, for instance, the two notes to be slurred are F, first position on the D string, second finger, and G on the D string with the third finger :

If the plectrum be made to strike the left-hand single string on the D string, and the second string on the double string D (to produce G) ; or must one shift up into the positions, and so be able to slur from double string to double string ?

We hope this is clear. It is merely a question of, can one, instead of striking with one stroke the ordinary double string of the mandolin, utilise each single string of the double string to facilitate slurring ?

Yours faithfully,
JOHN ELRICK.

Answer.

The slur is an embellishment which can only *be accomplished with a firm, fine tremolo, slurring the finger from the one note to the other on the* same *string.*

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